



## From the Stagebridge Founder

### The Next Stage

On May 7, I will board a plane for Berlin, Germany with my bicycle, one suitcase, and a backpack --- only this time, I will have a one way ticket. My plan is to live, work, dance and ride my bike in Berlin for the foreseeable future. I spent five weeks there last fall interviewing older artists and loved it. It is the most exciting cultural center I have ever experienced, very friendly (I know 25 people there), very affordable (at least half the cost of living here) and in the center of Europe. No, I don't know any German (except a few Yiddish phrases), most people speak English and it is exceedingly international and progressive.

**I will talking more about my work and my life on Tuesday, May 1 from 12 -1:00 pm at Stagebridge and I hope you will join me.**

We make changes for many reasons. Often change happens to us and sometimes, we choose to change. Mine is a combination. I have lived in the Bay Area since 1971. But living here has gotten to be more difficult when you are not earning a minimum salary of \$85,000 a year. Over the past four years, I have been traveling the world and increasingly spending more time out of the country than here. Last spring I lost my rent controlled apartment and knew then that it would be difficult, if not impossible to continue living here on my income. Furthermore, like most people I know, I cannot bear the current political situation any more and want to be somewhere that is sane and progressive, kind and generous. I woke up one morning last fall in Berlin and realized that I wanted to live there.



So, I have been giving away and selling most everything I have accumulated in the past 47 years of owning a home, raising a family and renting apartments with ample storage space. My prized Mexican blankets are now keeping some homeless people warm. A tango friend is now enjoying the pants I got married in. My barber loves the antique razor I have had for forty years. And friends are reading the books of poetry I kept since college. So far, I am down to eight boxes of family photos, journals and some mementos that I will store at my brothers. The process of clearing out the past has been quite sobering and I trust that when the plane takes off, it will be quite liberating.

For the past four years I have been listening to



older artists tell me their stories. Last fall in Germany, a singer/songwriter told me about being paralyzed in the hospital and having the orderly write the lyrics to a song he created in his mind. I met a tiny woman who creates massive metal sculptures. One of Germany's best known painters now in his 80's said he and his wife finish each other's paintings. I have written an article about them for a German magazine and you can [read it here](#).

I just returned from my annual trip/retreat to Buenos Aires where I go every year to study and dance tango. This year, I interviewed five tangeros from age 68 - 87. Some talked about starting to dance at age 12 and then dancing to the most famous orchestras of the 40's and 50's. The 87 year old didn't dance for the sixty years that he was married, but when his wife died he began again and now has a much younger girlfriend and tango partner. You can read my rather [personal blog of life, love and tango here](#).

I want to continue doing this work and find ways of sharing these important stories with people of all ages. I am thinking about exhibits, conferences, YouTube videos, and much more. I even have my first gig as a featured presenter at a German conference of senior theatres in June.



The "river" has been calling to me since I retired from Stagebridge. For a while I just put my feet in. It was far too cold and scary. Then gradually I got up the courage to go wading and felt more confident. Now, at age 69, it is finally time to just jump (while I still can) and see where the waters take me.

I will miss seeing you and will have a blog for you to follow my pratfalls and triumphs. I know that Stagebridge is going through a difficult time right now, but I feel confident that it will survive and thrive because of the dedicated staff and you.

Auf Wiedersehen,  
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